

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS are formally trained to work under the supervision of a medical doctor, assisting in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and injuries. They perform the less complex time-consuming tasks generally done by doctors. Physician Assistants interview patients, take medical histories, give physical examinations, and order laboratory tests. They perform routine therapeutic procedures: giving injections and immunizations, cleaning and stitching minor wounds, applying splints, removing casts, and routine laboratory procedures. By completing the more routine tasks, Physician Assistants allow doctors more time to treat gravely ill patients.

Some Physician Assistants help physicians in such specialty areas as pediatrics or surgery. Physician Assistants specialties include child health associates, urologic Physician Assistants, surgeon assistants, and emergency room Physician Assistants.

### Requirements

- ▲ Completion of either an associate or bachelor's degree in a physician assistant program at an accredited school. (Approximately two-thirds of all applicants to physician assistant programs hold a bachelor's degree.)
- ▲ Licensed by the Medical Board of California, Physician Assistant Committee.
- ▲ Emotional stability.
- ▲ Active listening skills.
- ▲ Patience and the ability to deal with all kinds of people.
- ▲ Fingerprint clearance may be required by employer.

### Wages

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| ▲ Physician Assistants<br>Median hourly wage: | \$39.72  |
| ▲ Average annual wage:                        | \$80,546 |

Source: Occupational Employment Survey of Employers 2006 by EDD/LMID.

## Physician Assistants

### Job Outlook

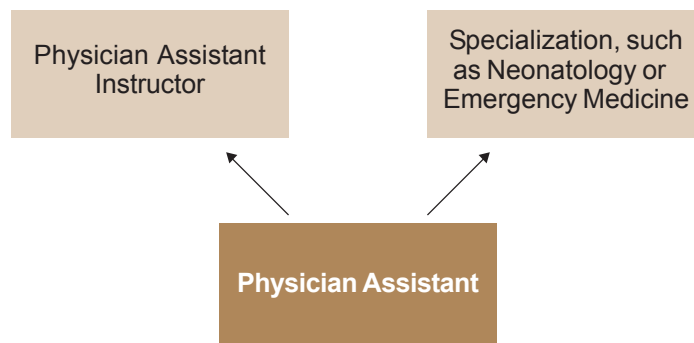
- ▲ Estimated number of Physician Assistants in 2004: 5,900
- ▲ Estimated number of Physician Assistants in 2014: 8,100
- ▲ Estimated annual job openings: 310

Source: Occupational Projections, EDD/LMID.

### Sources of Information

- ▲ Physician Assistant Committee  
(800) 555-8038  
[www.physicianassistant.ca.gov](http://www.physicianassistant.ca.gov)
- ▲ California Academy of Physician Assistants  
(714) 427-0321  
[www.capanet.org](http://www.capanet.org)
- ▲ *California Occupational Guide*, No. 508  
Physician Assistants

### Possible Career Paths



*The skills, knowledge, and abilities acquired for the primary occupation provide a solid foundation for further growth in health career occupations. Additional education or training is often required.*